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FROM THE

NEW YORK EVENING EXPRESS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 1873.

CANADA CORRESPONDENCE.

The series of letters we are publishing from Canada, from an old correspondent of 1837 (the year after the EXPRESS started, and before the old New York Daily Advertiser of Dwight and Townsend was merged into the EXPRESS,) with the occasional letters of an intelligent writer, keep our readers well posted in Canada matters. L.M.N. was the author of a series of able and independent letters which attracted much attention in England, Canada and the United States, and cost the writer seven years banishment from his home. The writer at the age of 70 has lost none of his force, we are glad to hear from him, though not so much now of the future as in review of the past.

CANADA.

The Rebellion of 1837; Interesting Reminiscences; Progress of Events; The Ministers sent out from England.

(From the Express Correspondent of 1837.)

MONTREAL, April 18, 1873.

SIRS: About thirty-seven years ago—that is, in the years 1836 and 1837—more than the lifetime of one generation, I addressed to the *New York Express* a series of letters, signed L.M.N., on the political position of Canada, which, from either their merit or their effrontery, were assumed to proceed from one who spoke with authority, and were republished by newspapers in all directions.

They were presumed to have done their part in hastening the crisis called "THE REBELLION OF 1837," and their prediction of the extinction of European control on this continent is now verified, though not in the order of previous calculations, for destiny in our day has adopted new rules of practice, and results to nations are accomplished by agencies of which our fathers dreamed not.

Outwardly, the contest here was one for supremacy between the French and English races forming our population; but underlying was the same grand principle of constitutional liberty which agitated England from the time of the First Charles to that of William. The English ranged themselves ridiculously on the side of the "prerogative," the French on the side of popular rights, and your correspondent, a hitherto quiet young "business" man, without political position, dashed into the melée on their side, like a knight-errant, neither seeking companionship nor asking reward. Quintus Curtius did not plunge into the gulf with greater self-sacrifice; fortunately for him, he did not come out to be told that his was no great exploit after all, or to be laughed at for the loss of his horse and accoutrements.

We were very noisy with our public meetings through the summer, and "resolutions," and some may have been "seditious," as the word has a wide range of application; but our demonstrations were still within the law as recognized in England and in the United States, when Lord Gosford, then Governor-General, sent the Attorney-General from Quebec to Montreal, to make

ARRESTS FOR HIGH TREASCN.

The judges were too noble to lend themselves to a process for which there was no foundation, but the Attorney-General was a man of resources. He found two willing Justices of the Peace, and with their illegal warrants, issued on the 16th November, 1837, sent to jail to pass the winter, and be released in the spring, a crowd of French Canadian gentlemen, of Montreal and its vicinity, against whom there were no grounds of accusation whatever. Leading agitators left the city. Rewards were offered for their capture. Your correspondent's head was valued at $2000. He ranked third on the list.

By a course of the merest accidents, I found myself on the morning of Nov. 18, 1837, landed with two companions at St. Charles, on the right bank of the Richelieu, thirty miles east from Montreal. Considering that we had rights of residence in our own country, and not caring to be disturbed by bailiffs, we determined on establishing a camp. Dr. Wolfred Nelson, with similar intent, established another at St. Denis, 9 miles lower down the river. Dr. Chenier with a few "aids," established a third at St. Eustache, 25 miles west of Montreal. The few country people assembled at each place with wretched fowling-pieces were speedily dispersed by brigades of British Infantry and Artillery, though Nelson repulsed the first attack on his position most heroically. My adventurous escape was recorded in your paper at the time, and an exile of nearly seven years followed.

Such was the whole measure and dimensions of the so-called "revolt" or "rebellion" in Lower Canada in 1837. With no previous intent, combination or organization, nobody was implicated but those that accident made actors in three places. Elsewhere everything passed in the ordinary quiet. In Upper Canada, McKenzie attempted an attack on Toronto, which failed. Along the frontier, from Lake Champlain to Detroit, desultory "patriots" in Canada, with desultory "sympathizers" on your side, organized, in the winter of 1838 and the autumn of the same year, several small invasions, which were easily repulsed. The delicious luxury of deceiving ourselves is common to organizations as to individuals. "Patriots" believed great forces were coming to their assistance. "Sympathizers" believed that immense bodies of "patriots" would be in battle array when the invaders arrived; but when the day did come, the meagre number of invaders encouraged no rising of "patriots" even had it been intended, and as few hailed their coming, the "sympathizers" were glad to back out.

The summer of 1838 saw Canada garrisoned by 15,000 British troops, at a cost to England of three millions sterling, all of which should be charged to Lord John Russell, for not doing in March (1837) what he did do in October, by which all political troubles might have been smoothed over, and your correspondent, with some of his friends, spared the loss of the best years of their lives.

The brains of those involved in the intensity of revolutionary agitation became sadly disordered, and men are apt to die before they are cooled down again for the practical uses of common life. The new battle for personal re-establishment is a hard one, in which few are conquerors. With the additional troops came Lord

Durham, as a sort of dictator, high commissioner and pacificator, bringing with him a staff of able men, who among them, got up a report somewhat complimentary to our side, as many passages read very like our own compositions; but, as he must do something for "justice," several prisoners, whose overt acts brought them within the technicalities of high treason, were, without trial, transported to Bermuda; and certain absentees, among whom was named your correspondent, had a sentence of death recorded, to be executed should they be caught in Her Majesty's dominions. The British Parliament, not exactly appreciating this novel code of criminal procedure, disallowed the edict, and Lord Durham, throwing up his hand, returned home in a "miff," to make room as Governor-General for Poulet Thompson (Lord Sydenham), a thorough "business" man, who, unencumbered by any inconvenient scruples, and acting upon the maxim that the end justifies the means —which we all fling at the Jesuits, but act upon ourselves—made people who were opposed to the measure consent to a legislative union of the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, and put all government affairs in a train of good working order.

Then came Sir Charles Bagot, an amiable old diplomatist, during whose time was passed by our Parliament, and approved in England, an unpretending-looking resolution, to the effect that our government should be conducted according to

"THE WELL-UNDERSTOOD WISHES OF THE PEOPLE,"

which few words now comprise the "Constitution" called "Responsible Government" of British Colonies, the positive intent and meaning being that each shall be governed by the people themselves, as England is governed, with no foreign interference whatever. A lower House elected by the people, an upper House appointed by the Crown, or some hocus-pocus, and a Governor appointed by the Crown (Lieutenant-Governors will be noticed hereafter), who, like the Queen, reigns as a pageant, without ruling, the real ruler being the premier, or man who can command a majority in the lower House, and who is assumed to represent "the well-understood wishes of the people," to which the powerless Governor assents, as a mere matter of form. This system, worked by an oligarchy, has done well in England, where tradition, usage and fiction (the voice of the people has never yet been heard in the people's house), maintain their checks, and it has done good work here; but in the naked realities of a younger stage of nationality, it is dangerous machinery that jumbles legislative with executive powers, and, ignoring the existence of a minority, makes the head of a democratic majority an absolute, unchecked ruler in all things. Some day, when common thought becomes developed into public opinion, which cannot yet be said to have an existence in Canada, where the masses, like the strong horse, are content to be led or driven, democracy will see the necessity of erecting barriers against itself. Where would you be today, if, on every night during sessions of Congress in the last ninety-seven years, your Government had been liable to overthrow on a chance vote in the House of Representatives? Lord Metcalf followed, an excellent and able East Indian official, who could not exactly understand how he could represent Her Majesty with honor, or the need of any Governor at all, if he was to be in all things controlled by some loud-mouthed village lawyer, who could control in the Assembly a few votes more than the leading lawyer of the next village—and was inclined to interfere; but "the well understood wishes" proved too strong, and he was replaced in 1846.

Lord Elgin, who in this year accepted the position with all its pageantry and pay, was one of those mental light-weights who by a cunning exercise and exhibi-

tion of thepower they possess, like "light-weights" of the prize ring, opposing "science" to the slow force of "big uns," come off victorious, and earn, as he did, a well-earned celebrity. Lord Elgin's motto was "dignified neutrality." His wisdom, for he was a wise man, saw a fact in "responsible Government," which he allowed to work freely, in the entirety of its conception, and during his stay confined himself to that easiest of all tasks in this world—siding with the strongest.

His successors, Sir Edmund Head, Lord Monck, and Lord Lisgar, have left no heroics upon our records. Mention of our present Governor-General may be made hereafter.

Old Times; British Territory; a Farmer's Paradise; the New Pacific Railroad.

At the age of 70 your old correspondent finds himself in his old city of Montreal, floating down the current of life, in companionship with the biggest fishes, as pleasantly as though, governed by

"PRUDENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS,"

or "timid counsels," he had, false to the traditions of our noblest English forefathers, always worshipped the "prerogative," or embarked in nothing where he could not first discern some personal advantage. If, in the decline of a life of independence, conscience upbraids us with the little we have done for our fellow-men, there is relief in the reflection that we owe nothing to these same fellow-men for any appreciation, reward, or thanks for what we have attempted. And here concludes the parable of L. M. N.

THE BRITISH TERRITORY

on your north, which, until half a dozen years ago, was kn[illegible] Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Lower and Upper Canada, now greatly increased, i[illegible] all the civilized world, in wealth, strength and comfort, is confederated into what is called the

"DOMINION OF CANADA,"

to which has since been added all the western British possessions to the Pacific, containing from east to west a population of three millions and a half. Were all men, women and children called out to guard the frontier, they would form a line of sentinels, fifty feet apart, without reliefs. Bordered on the south by the curved line of nine of your States, to the west of Lake Superior, and thence by the forty-ninth parallel to the Pacific, two new Provinces have been organized, one at the Red River of the North, bordering Minnesota and Dakotah, called "Manitoba," and the other on the Pacific, with Vancouver's Island, called "British Columbia;" that is, a strip altogether running from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with yourselves a possibly dangerous neighbour, on the south, and no danger of any neighbour whatever on the north, by reason of eternal ice and snow. And then it is rather disjointed. Nova Scotia is separated from New Brunswick by the Bay of Fundy, and the latter from the best part of Lower Canada, now Province of Quebec, by the State of Maine, which runs up to within some thirty miles of the St. Lawrence. A line drawn west from Montreal, latitude forty-five and a-half, strikes the Georgian Bay, south of which line lies most that is valuable in the Peninsula of Upper Canada (now Province of Ontario,) and for more land we must go

round the north of Lake Superior (latitude 49), where some hundreds of miles of uninviting territory separates us from Manitoba. Every man along this line is uncomfortably distant from his fellow-subjects, and provokingly near to your people, for not to love you or your institutions is our duty.

THE WHEAT COUNTRY.

Neither Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, nor the lower portion of the Province of Quebec are celebrated for their agricultural capacity, but the valley of the upper St. Lawrence, running from a few miles north of the river to the States that it joins, the valley of the Ottawa, with its tributaries, and some forty or fifty thousand square miles in Ontario, compare favourably with the region to their south. Manitoba and the western extension is a country of "bulls" and "bears" (of the two-legged kind, I mean, who toss up, or pull down), one assuring us that wheat, which averages twenty bushels to the acre from Pennsylvania to Dakotah, averages fifty bushels in Manitoba, while another says that, if not eaten up by grasshoppers, it freezes in August. One tells us that cattle fatten in winter on pastures buried under twelve inches of snow, another that they perish unless well housed and cared for.

One tells of fine garden vegetables growing where another says the ground never thaws three inches deep. The truth is, isothermal lines rise as we proceed west, and the fifty-fifth parallel there may compare with the forty-fifth here.

ON THE PACIFIC,

the mean temperature may be still higher, and it may be comforting for you to know that if Northern British Columbia at 54.40 be somewhat tropical, southern Alaska, which joins it there, cannot be exactly Siberian. Wherever there are great rivers, there must be, except in ice-bound regions, fertile plains and valleys, and in our western possessions, after discounting largely for unprofitable portions, there must be vast portions fitted for the happy dwelling place of man. A railroad north of Lake Superior, through to the Pacific, will soon open all to the population of Europe, who will be attracted by all reasonable facilities and inducements, and were not mankind distracted by all the land to be "opened" for settlement between this and Patagonia, not to mention New Holland and the Islands of the Ocean, we might expect to see the country filled up in our day, provided always, that Europe discovers a more prolific process of incubation, or prevention for the mortality of infants, and the "heathen Chinee" lends his assistance. Ireland is tolerably drained; Germany and Scandinavia are not inexaustible; Southern Europe has a sufficient outlet in Africa; Russia moves eastward. Malthus is no longer a prophet.

History, Romance and Tradition; a Great National Highway; the new Governor-General.

Leaving the future of this western extension in "the lap of the gods," to be shaken out as time may determine, let us return to OLD CANADA—the Canada of two hundred years' history, romance, and tradition—stretching southwesterly from Gaspé, lat. 49, to Detroit, lat. 42. over one thousand miles, through, or along, which flows the most magnificent inland water-course on our globe, in a direct line from the centre of our American continent to central Europe, and the shortest possible

route—a great natural highway to the ocean, not merely for the small Canadian territory on the north side, but for seven of your States on the south, and all that western expanse between the 42d and 49th parallels, whose eastern depot is Duluth. Ships and steamers of the largest size that float upon the ocean may come up full-loaded to this city of Montreal, 500 miles inland. Above us, to complete the navigation, are the largest locks and canals in the world, and these will be soon more enlarged to admit of the passage of vessels of 800 tons to Lake Superior, that may tranship here at trifling cost. Your "West" clamors for more outlet to the Eastern World. We have it direct and cheap, and they will use it.

Then, say you, "We must have annexation." Well, "annexation" may be in the cards, but apparently it is not in the hands dealt out to present players. There are many people who call themselves "Annexationists," but few men, with political aspirations, would dare to announce themselves to be of that sect. Doubtless there is a proud Americanism growing up that will hereafter spurn the idea of dependence on anything European, but the men of to-day see in "responsible government" complete independence for internal concerns, a complete control of our own resources, *and an unlimited privilege of running into debt*, while Great Britain, maintaining foreign relations, armies and navies, throws their shield over us at no charge, and tells us that entire independence may be had off hand whenever asked by the "well-understood wishes."

I have told you that the Governor-General is the only British authority now in the "Dominion." Each of the now six provinces have a separate "responsible government," subordinate only to the Government of the Dominion, with a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by and representing the Governor-General in all business matters, and only representing the Queen in ceremonies or tomfooleries, that will soon become contemptible even to our accustomed eyes.

OLD LOWER CANADA,

now the Province of Quebec, is a French parish, three-fourths of the population being French-speaking Catholics, whose language, religion and laws, guaranteed at the Conquest, have been honorably maintained. Though nominally French, they are among the purest native-born American of any nationality on this continent, except the Indians, for there has been little admixture of foreign blood for more than a century. A most amiable people, many figure well in politics, at the bar, on the bench, as physicians, as merchants, or as mechanics; but the bulk are tillers of the soil, who, adopting the Buddhist philosophy, that the cause of misery lies in desire, desire too little, and indulge in what in America is the crime of being content with plain living and too small expenditure. These, where their priests are local rulers, care little for change. Those who become restive annex themselves to your side of the lines, where hundreds of thousands are settled, and every year, such is the fecundity of these Celts, continues the exodus.

THE "DOMINION" IS A SCOTCH COLONY,

as that nationality, by its superior ability and control of the press, the banks, the importing trade, and the most important part of the retail, maintains a general supremacy. Luckily, there is no king of Scotland, for, imitating the House of Braganza, he would abandon his little kingdom in the East to found an empire in the West. The Israelites are superseded—these Scotch are the "chosen people" of our age. Round the world, from the Equator to nearer the North Pole and the

South Pole than any other white man, he is to be found, every where strong-minded and clear-headed, a chief having subjects under him, whom he directs for their advantage and his own profit. Whether a farmer, mechanic or merchant, he always aims to be the best of his class, and a model for all. The influence of such a people must be great. *They* do not see the gain of "annexation," and until they do, we may pause on the consideration. The numerous "Americans" in Canada, feeling apparently as if they were looked upon as repentant rebels seeking comfort under the old flag, have never held the position to which they are entitled by their wealth and character. Of the Irish, the Protestant portion are fervently loyal to the British Crown, and the Catholic, like those with you, not remarkable in this line.

Another "stopper" is now found in our popular Governor-General, for the huge mass of undefined or half-formed opinion is often directed in its course by little touches, like as the finger of a child on the steering apparatus of a leviathan steamship turns the monster to north or south.

THE EARL OF DUFFERIN

appears one of the high types of humanity, who, on becoming Governor, has not ceased to be a gentleman, whose influence will be directed for good, and who will endeavor to achieve that most difficult thing for an European—to look at American things with American eyes; but we must remember that even "Earls" are made from the common ingredients of common mortals, and that when we subtract from the best of us all the folly and all the weakness that enters into our compositions, there may be little left to make the man.

As a rule, if you scratch any newly arrived Briton you may find a buccaneer, impressed with the legendary idea that all possessed by Americans, whether political or material, is a sort of spontaneous growth, to which he has no special right against the will of the first-come European. Our Governor-General is probably far removed from this, and there has been a manly frankness in the kindly social relations which he has courted, that gives him a large place in the hearts of our people, who see comfort

IN BRITISH CONNECTION,

that gives us for pageantry a high-minded representative of Majesty, and saves us from some diligent governor of our own choice, who might, in these days of speculation and sudden fortune, engineer many schemes with more profit than honor.

To conclude, you must not forget that we a[re] not yet fully out of our colonial swaddling clothes—that our thought comes from European sources, transmitted through European influences. When thought, emancipated and Americanized, enables us, with American manliness, to look with disdain on European pretensions, and the third generation ceases to speak of Europe as "home," we shall be prepared for a change of some sort.

Such are the musings of one who is now a mere looker-on.

T. S. B.

[Thomas Storrow Brown]

MITCHELL AND WILSON, PRINTERS, MONTREAL.